Sport Canada

Athlete Assistance Program
Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to give athletes, coaches and sport administrators the information they need on the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP).

In general, the AAP recognizes the commitment athletes make to long-term training and competitive programs and seeks to relieve some of the pressures associated with participation in international sport. In particular, the AAP provides financial assistance to Canadian high-performance athletes. This assistance helps athletes with their training and competition needs, and it goes *directly* to athletes. (The AAP is the *only* Sport Canada program to provide direct financial support for athletes.)

The AAP complements other Sport Canada programs, such as sport science support, coaching support and development and National Team programs, and its success depends on the co-ordinated efforts of NSOs, athletes and Sport Canada. Sport Canada hopes the AAP will encourage provincial government agencies and provincial sport organizations to assist athletes ranked just below those receiving AAP funding. Such support would provide continuity in the development of international-class Canadian athletes.

This handbook has ten sections:

- Section 1: Program Goals and Objectives;
- Section 2: Program Overview;
- Section 3: Card Allocation;
- Section 4: Carding Criteria;
- Section 5: Financial Benefits;
- Section 6: Application Procedure and Responsibilities;
- Section 7: Guidelines for the Athlete/NSO Agreement;
- Section 8: Withdrawal of Carded Status;
- Section 9: Special Situations; and
- Section 10: Index

Note: Sport Canada has also developed the *Athlete Assistance Program Athlete Handbook*, which summarizes the AAP policies, procedures and guidelines athletes need to know. *The Athlete Assistance Program Athlete Handbook* is distributed annually to all carded athletes and their coaches.

Section 1 Program Goals and Objectives

This section answers three broad questions about the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP):

- What is the main goal of the AAP?
- What are the objectives of the AAP?
- How does the AAP achieve its objectives?

Note: The AAP is one of several Sport Canada programs designed to assist in the development of high-performance sport. It is NOT intended to meet *all* the needs of Canada's high-performance athletes. Other Sport Canada funding — for example, funding for National Team training and competition — addresses other needs of these athletes.

Note: AAP support is subject to athletes' availability to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Championships, Olympic Games and Paralympic Games; participation in preparatory and annual training programs; and adherence to their Athlete/National Sport Organization (NSO) Agreement.

1.1 What Is the Main Goal of the AAP?

The main goal of the AAP is to contribute to improved Canadian performances at major international sporting events such as the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Pan Am Games, Paralympic Games and World Championships. To this end, the AAP identifies and supports athletes already at or having the potential to be in the top 16 in the world.

1.2 What Are the Objectives of the AAP?

The AAP has five specific objectives:

- To identify and support Canadian athletes performing at or having the greatest potential to achieve top 16 results at Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships.
- To help Canada's international-calibre athletes excel at the highest level of competition while enabling them to prepare for a future career or engage in full- or part-time career activities.
- To facilitate the attainment of athletes' long-range goals of excellence in Olympic/Paralympic or world competition.
- To complement other government and NSO support programs.
- To contribute toward broad Government policy objectives.

1.3 How Does the AAP Achieve Its Objectives?

The AAP achieves its objectives by —

- providing national standards for the identification and support of high-performance athletes;
- ensuring that appropriate selection procedures are in place;
- collaborating with NSOs to provide annual, ongoing and long-term evaluation of athlete performance and potential;
- helping to offset some of the living and training costs athletes incur as a result of their participation in high-performance sport;

- ensuring the provision of financial support to athletes in a consistent and timely manner;
- providing incentives through the establishment of progressive, increasingly challenging criteria and graduated support;
- recognizing and rewarding Canadian athletes for outstanding performances in major international events such as Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships;
- ensuring, in conjunction with the NSO, that appropriate training and competitive opportunities are in place to help athletes reach their full athletic potential;
- providing financial support to allow athletes to attain academic goals and assisting in the preparation for a post-athletic career;
- allowing athletes to maintain a long-term commitment to training and competition to further their athletic goals;
- ensuring that mutual responsibilities are outlined and understood by athletes and NSOs;
- ensuring that athlete/NSO agreements are signed each year;
- linking AAP support to other government and sport-specific initiatives such as National Training Centres or coaching support;
- contributing to the creation of Canadian heroes and to national pride through the accomplishments of Canadian athletes;
- contributing to the creation of role models for Canadian youth;
- contributing to the promotion of national unity through the promotion of the accomplishments of Canadian athletes;
- promoting and ensuring compliance with other government policies, e.g., anti-doping; and
- providing a focal point for government support to high-performance sport and athletes.

Note: The AAP is the only Sport Canada program that provides funding *directly* to athletes.

Section 2 Program Overview

This section presents an overview of the AAP. It answers six questions about the overall functioning of the Program:

- What are the general principles of AAP support?
- How do sports qualify for the AAP?
- How do athletes qualify for the AAP?
- How are carding criteria set?
- How long are carding cycles?
- What cards are available?

Section 3 answers questions about card allocation, and Section 4 covers carding criteria.

2.1 What Are the General Principles of AAP Support?

- AAP financial support is usually limited to athletes in sports that are financially supported by Sport Canada as a result of the implementation of the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF) or the Funding and Accountability Framework for Athletes with a Disability (FAFAD).
- In Olympic sports supported by Sport Canada, only events that are on the program of the upcoming Olympic Games are eligible for AAP support.

2.2 How Do Sports Qualify for the AAP?

- Normally, the NSO must be funded by Sport Canada through SFAF or FAFAD.
- The sport must have a sanctioned World Championship, World Cup or equivalent championship that is held at least biennially.
- The NSO must have a clearly articulated national team program with appropriate training and competitive opportunities (both domestic and international) for each of the proposed carded athletes.
- The NSO's national team program must also be based on year-round training principles that include significant daily training activities.
- Athletes nominated for the AAP must have an individualized annual training program based on year-round training principles that include significant daily training activities.
- The NSO must formally monitor and evaluate athletes' training and competitive programs. The NSO must designate a national coach or a person of equivalent qualifications and status (e.g., High Performance Director) to perform these tasks.
- The NSO must conduct a formal process for selecting athletes for national teams. Rules and procedures for selection must be published and made known to all concerned, along with procedures for appealing decisions.
- The NSO must have in place an Athlete/NSO agreement that is approved by Sport Canada and signed by all National Team athletes.

> Normally, sports must be funded through SFAF or FAFAD

Olympic demonstration sports or Olympic demonstration events are *not* considered Olympic sports for the purposes of the AAP.

2.3 How Do Athletes Qualify for the AAP?

The minimum requirements for athlete AAP eligibility are as follows:

- The athlete must be a PERMANENT RESIDENT OF CANADA on the date of the beginning of the carding cycle, and the athlete shall have been a legal resident in Canada (student status, refugee status, work visa or permanent resident) for a minimum period of one year before being considered for AAP support. The athlete would normally be expected to have participated in NSO-sanctioned programs during that time period.
- The athlete, under the eligibility requirements of the sport's International Federation (IF), must currently be eligible to represent Canada at major internationai events including World Championships.
- Athletes must meet the carding criteria as a member of a Canadian Team, at international events or in a domestic event or events sanctioned by the NSO for such purposes.
- For athletes in Olympic or Paralympic sports, following a three-year period as a permanent resident, continued eligibility to receive AAP is contingent on the athlete becoming eligible to represent Canada at the Olympic or Paralympic Games.

Note: It is recommended that NSOs include the above information with their carding criteria.

Athletes in Olympic sports competing in World Championship events that are not on the Olympic program are not eligible for carding based on performances in those events.

Athletes in non-Olympic events which are under consideration for inclusion in the official program of future Olympic Games may be considered for carding under the Olympic sport criteria following confirmation by the IOC that the sport/event has been added to the program of the next Olympic Games.

2.4 How Are Carding Criteria Set?

Sport Canada sets the criteria for the A- and B-card levels.

Criteria for all other levels of cards should be set as follows:

- The NSO Head Coach or Coaching Committee proposes carding criteria.
- The Athlete Representative and appropriate NSO decision-making body review the criteria and make recommendations regarding the criteria.
- The appropriate NSO Technical Committee reviews and approves the criteria.
- Sport Canada reviews and approves the criteria for general publication within each sport.

Carding criteria are normally approved by Sport Canada and distributed by the NSO ten months before the beginning of the sport's carding year. Carding criteria should be published no later than the beginning of the competition cycle for the upcoming carding period.

Wherever possible, the criteria should be based on objective results. The NSO may choose to use the results from designated Canadian competitions (which may include National Championships), the results from designated international competitions or a combination of results from both designated Canadian and international competitions. Team sport carding criteria should normally be linked to National Team selection criteria and the National Team depth chart.

Criteria should be based on objective results

The opportunity to meet competitive results required for carding should be consistent with a sport's national training or competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Canada.

The working documents or data used to nominate athletes using approved criteria (actual results of World Championships, National Championships, World Ranking lists, etc.) and to validate actual performances shall be made available to Sport Canada at the time of nomination. Further information on the application process and submission format is outlined in Section 6, "Application Procedure and Responsibilities."

2.5 How Long Are Carding Cycles?

Carding cycles are *usually* 12 months long.

Factors such as the timing of major events sometimes require that the carding cycle be shorter or longer than 12 months. In such cases, NSOs may negotiate a shorter or longer carding cycle with Sport Canada.

2.6 What Cards Are Available?

The following cards are available to athletes in individual sports:

- A cards;
- B cards;
- C cards;
- C-1 cards;
- D cards; and
- TC cards.

The following cards are available to athletes in team sports:

- A cards;
- B cards;
- C cards;
- C-1 cards;
- R cards;
- J cards; and
- TC cards.

Note: In both individual and team sports, National Team cards are awarded to athletes deemed to have the potential to reach A- and B-card status. National Team cards include C, C-1, D and TC cards for individual sports; they include C, C-1, R, J and TC cards for team sports.

Section 3 Card Allocation

This section presents information on card allocation. Three major topics are covered:

- card allocation for Olympic individual sports;
- card allocation for Olympic team sports; and
- card allocation for Paralympic/non-Olympic sports.

3.1 Card Allocation for Olympic Individual Sports

In Olympic individual sports, carding is available at the A, B, C, C-1, D and TC levels.

The maximum number of cards *at all levels* an Olympic sport is eligible for equals

- the number of Canadian Olympic entrants at the most recent Olympic Games

plus

- the average number of Canadian World Championship entrants for the three years preceding the most recent Olympic Games.

The total number of cards at the C, C-1, D and TC levels is determined every four years, after the Olympic Games. This is determined by calculating the base number of cards and the bonus number of cards.

Base Number of Cards

A *base number of cards* is awarded on the basis of a sport's National Team requirements. These requirements are in turn based on the following calculation:

- 25% of (the total of the number of athletes required to field an entry in each event on the program of the Olympic Games PLUS the actual number of athletes who participated in the most recent Summer or Winter Olympic Games).

Base number of cards depends on National Team requirements

The number of athletes who participated in World Championships in the three years preceding the Olympic Games will also be taken into consideration.

Bonus Number of Cards

A *bonus number of cards* is awarded to each sport on the basis of the level of excellence demonstrated by athletes in the sport. This level in turn depends on the number of athletes with results in the top 3, top 4-8 and top 9-16 in the most recent Summer or Winter Olympic Games. The number of bonus cards equals —

- the number of athletes with a top 3 placing X 2

plus

- the number of athletes with a top 4-8 placing X 1

plus

Bonus number of cards depends on performance of athletes

- the number of athletes with a top 9-16 placing X 0.5

The results of the World Championships in the three years preceding the Olympic Games will also be used to determine the number of bonus cards to issue.

3.2 Card Allocation for Olympic Team Sports

Athletes who compete in team sports on the program of the Summer or Winter Olympic Games will be eligible for carding at the A, B, C, C-1, TC, R and J levels.

A maximum number of cards is established for each Olympic team sport. In general, this number depends on —

- the number of athletes required to field a team at World Championships or Olympic Games; and
- performance in international competition

Here are the specifics of card allocation in team sports:

- Athletes on teams that achieve A- or B-card criteria will be awarded A or B cards. However, only athletes who actually participate or have playing time during the event will be considered for A or B carding. Athletes who are reserves or spares and do not participate in the competition will not be considered.
- A *base* number of cards will be awarded, and these cards will be A, B, C or C-1 cards. This number depends on the number of athletes required to field a team at World Championships or Olympic Games. For example, basketball would be allocated 12 National Team cards.
- A *bonus* number of cards may be awarded at the R or J level to teams ranked in the top three in the world. The number awarded cannot exceed Olympic team size, and the sport must have minimum AAP program requirements in place.
- A *bonus* number of R or J cards may be awarded for a reserve squad to teams ranked in the top eight in the world. This number cannot exceed 50% of the number of athletes on the Olympic team, and the sport must have minimum AAP program requirements in place.
- A *bonus* number of R or J cards may be awarded for a reserve squad to teams ranked in the top 12 in the world. This number cannot exceed 25% of the number of athletes on the Olympic team, and the sport must have minimum AAP program requirements in place.

3.3 Card Allocation for Paralympic/Non-Olympic Sports

In Paralympic/non-Olympic sports, carding at the A, B, C and C-1 levels is available.

The number of cards a Paralympic/non-Olympic sport is eligible for is determined on a sport-by-sport basis according to criteria negotiated by the NSO and Sport Canada and the number of athletes able to meet the criteria.

Section 4 Carding Criteria

This section presents detailed information on carding criteria for individual and team sports. This information is presented in the following order:

- common carding criteria;
- carding criteria specific to individual sports; and
- carding criteria specific to team sports.

4.1 Common Carding Criteria

Certain carding criteria are common to individual and team sports. This section covers those common criteria as they apply to A, B, C, C-1 and TC cards.

A and B Cards

A and B cards are awarded to athletes based on their international performance at Olympic Games, Paralympic Games or World Championships. Sport Canada establishes these criteria.

In Paralympic events that do not have a minimum of 10 countries entered, B cards will be available to athletes who placed in the top 3 at Paralympic Games or World Championships with a minimum of 10 entries and a minimum of five (5) countries.

A and B cards are awarded on the basis of performance in international competition

A and B cards recognize and reward Canadian athletes for outstanding performances in World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games.

Sport Canada believes in equity of opportunity for all athletes within AAP-eligible sports to achieve A- and B-card status. However, in sports that do not have a major event (World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games) in each year of the quadrennial, equal opportunity to qualify for A- or B-card status does not exist.

Therefore, in an effort to provide equal opportunity for all athletes, A or B cards may be awarded based on performances other than those achieved in Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships. This would apply only in years in which there is no World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games in a given sport or event. Normally, such events as an annual World Cup, World Cup rankings or World list rankings will be considered.

For results to be considered for A- or B-carding purposes, the NSO must demonstrate that the performance criteria used are of equal significance and quality as a World Championship OR demonstrate that a World Cup list or World ranking list is comprehensive and indicative of the athlete's actual ranking in the world. A and B cards awarded in this manner would be awarded on a one-year basis only.

What Are the Criteria for A Carding?

Generally, A cards are awarded to athletes in eligible sports on the basis of results at Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships. Athletes must meet **both** of the following performance criteria to be considered for A carding:

- finish in the top 4, 6, or 8, depending on the number of entries per country, as follows —
  - in events limited to one entry per country, finish in the top 4;
  - in events limited to two entries per country, finish in the top 6;
  - in events with three or more entries per country, finish in the top 8 (counting a maximum of 3 athletes per country); and
- finish in the top third of their field.

Note: In cases where the Olympic/Paralympic or World Championship field is restricted by either the IF or IOC as a result of qualification processes or other types of entry restrictions, the requirement regarding the top third of the field may be waived.

Note: In Olympic/Paralympic years, new A cards will be awarded only on the basis of results achieved in the Olympic/Paralympic Games.

How Long Are A Cards Good For?

A cards earned through results at Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships will be for a period of two years, provided a training and competitive program approved by the NSO and Sport Canada is maintained and the Athlete/NSO Agreement has been signed. All A cards awarded on the basis of results achieved at events other than the World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games will be for a one-year period.

Can A Carding Be Retroactive?

Yes. An athlete *may* be carded at the A-card level for a two-year period retroactive to the beginning of the carding cycle —

- *if* he or she achieves an A-card performance in a World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games within six months of the beginning of the carding cycle; and
- *if* the NSO and Sport Canada so agree at the Annual AAP Review Meeting.

What Are the Criteria for B Carding?

Generally, B-card classification is available to athletes in eligible sports based on results achieved in the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games or World Championships. In Olympic years, new B cards will be awarded only on the basis of results achieved in the Olympic/Paralympic Games. The following standards must be obtained for consideration:

- finish in the top 8, 12, or 16, depending on the number of entries per country, as follows —
  - in events limited to one entry per country, finish in the top 8;
  - in events limited to two entries per country, finish in the top 12;
  - in events with three or more entries per country (counting a maximum of 3 athletes per country), finish in the top 16; and
- finish in the top half of their field.

Note: In cases where the Olympic/Paralympic or World Championship field is restricted by either the IF or IOC as a result of qualification processes or other types of entry restrictions, the requirement regarding the top half of the field may be waived.

How Long Are B Cards Good For?

B cards earned through results in Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships will be for a period of two years, provided a training and competitive program approved by the NSO and Sport Canada is maintained and the Athlete/NSO Agreement has been signed. All B cards awarded on the basis of results achieved in events other than the World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games will be for a one-year period.

Can B Carding Be Retroactive?

Yes. An athlete *may* be carded at the B-card level for a two-year period retroactive to the beginning of the carding cycle —

- *if* he or she achieves a B-card performance in a World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games within six months of the beginning of the carding cycle; and
- *if* the NSO and Sport Canada so agree at the Annual AAP Review Meeting.

What If an Athlete Cannot Requalify for A or B Carding?

In keeping with a philosophy of consistent long-term support, an athlete carded at the A- or B-card level who is unable to requalify for his or her A or B card in a World Championships, Olympic Games or Paralympic Games may be permitted to retain his or her A- or B-card status if, in the judgement of the NSO and Sport Canada, continuation of A- or B-card status is warranted. *The athlete may be permitted to retain his or her A- or B-card status by achieving the agreed-upon maintenance criteria.* The following guidelines apply in such cases:

- Only athletes carded at the A- or B-card level in the carding cycle immediately before the new carding cycle will be considered under the maintenance criteria. No new A or B cards will be awarded on the basis of maintenance criteria.
- An athlete's carding status will not be upgraded on the basis of maintenance criteria.
- The NSO must demonstrate to Sport Canada that continuation of A- or B-card status is warranted based on the athlete achieving an equivalent A- or B-card standard in the same carding year. Such standards may be established on the basis of results from major international events, World Cup rankings, World Ranking lists, etc. The maintenance criteria must be negotiated with and approved by Sport Canada the year *before* the new carding cycle. The NSO must demonstrate that the standard used is of the same significance and quality as the performance required at Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championship OR demonstrate that a World Cup list or World ranking list is comprehensive and a valid indicator of the athlete's actual ranking in the world for that year.
- A and B cards awarded based on the maintenance criteria will be for a one-year period and may not be awarded for two consecutive years.

Sport Canada also recognizes the priority placed on Olympic/Paralympic Games and athlete preparation for these games. Therefore, in cases where an athlete carded at the A- or B-card level for two or more consecutive years does not have the opportunity to requalify his or her A or B card in the carding cycle immediately before an Olympic/Paralympic Games, an extension of his or her A or B card for a maximum of six months may be considered through the conclusion of the Olympic/Paralympic

Games. This consideration would require that the NSO recommend the athlete, citing extenuating circumstances and the merit of the athlete's actual performance.

C Cards

C cards are intended to support athletes with demonstrated potential to reach A- or B-card status. The criteria for C cards are negotiated between Sport Canada and the NSO and should, wherever possible, be based on objective results achieved in designated competitions. The competitions that may be used are domestic competitions (preferably National Championships), international competitions or a combination of both. The competitions used for the NSO C carding criteria should be consistent with the sport's national training and competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Canada.

> C cards are for athletes with the potential to achieve A or B carding

How Long Are C Cards Good For?

C cards are normally awarded for a one-year period. However, this may vary, depending on the athlete's involvement in the NSO's National Team Program. For example, if an athlete is training outside Canada on an NCAA scholarship, the athlete may be funded for only the part of the year when he or she is NOT attending the NCAA institution and IS training or competing under the direct supervision of the NSO. The carding cycle may also be shortened or extended by one or two months, depending on the NSO's competition cycle in relation to major events such as World Championships.

How Many Years Can C Carding Last?

Athletes are normally expected to improve each year to maintain a C-card level in Olympic/Paralympic events. The C-carding criteria should stipulate a maximum number of years an athlete will be supported at the C-card level. The maximum number of years an athlete should be supported at the C-card level will vary from sport to sport and will be negotiated between Sport Canada and each NSO. If an athlete does not reach A- or B-card level within the prescribed number of years and the athlete is again nominated at the C-card level, the athlete's year-to-year improvement, progression toward the A- or B-card standard and future potential will be reviewed. On the basis of this review, Sport Canada will, in conjunction with the NSO, determine whether an additional year of support at the C-card level is warranted.

C-1 Cards

C-1 cards are a probationary type of card for the first year an athlete has satisfied the C-card criteria. An athlete is classified as a C-1 in the first year that he or she meets the C-card criteria, even if he or she has previously been carded at a lower level (D, TC, R, J, etc.). If, however, the athlete has been carded at a higher level (A or B) before meeting the C-card criteria, the athlete will be awarded a C card rather than a C-1 card.

> C-1 cards are for the first year an athlete has C carding

Athletes who are eligible for the AAP and meet the carding criteria but are not funded

because they are on an athletic scholarship or are living outside Canada should be nominated for carding by the NSO and recorded by Sport Canada. This *could* result in the C-1 card status being waived if the athlete moves back to Canada and meets the C-card criteria in subsequent years.

Athletes who meet carding criteria but are not funded will NOT be included in the sport's quota of cards.

TC Cards

Training Centre (TC) cards are intended for athletes who have the potential to achieve A or B carding. Certain athletes may qualify for TC-card status if they are required to make a long-term commitment to a Sport Canada/NSO-recognized High Performance Training Centre. Only athletes who meet the majority of the general considerations outlined in the D-card criteria will be considered for Training Centre cards. This may include athletes in team sports, athletes in sports with crew events or athletes in sports in which training partners are essential for the continuing development of the athlete.

These cards will generally be allocated to sports where the technical complexity or training cycle of the sport is such that athletes must follow sophisticated programs for many years before attaining international standards and where it is in the best interest of the athlete and the sport to bring the athlete under the auspices of the NSO, the National Team Program and the High Performance Training Centre.

The specific criteria required for TC cards should be negotiated on a sport-specific basis by the NSO and Sport Canada. The criteria should, wherever possible, be based on objective results obtained in designated domestic or international competitions. The competitions used in the criteria should be consistent with the sport's international and domestic training and competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best young athletes in Canada.

How Long Are TC Cards Good For?

TC cards are awarded for one year. To receive an extension past the initial year, the athlete must meet the TC criteria again and commit to training at the NSO High Performance Sport Centre.

4.2 Carding Criteria Specific to Individual Sports

Certain carding criteria are specific to individual sports. This section covers those criteria as they apply to D cards.

D Cards

In general, the need for Development (D) cards should be identified in the NSO's Multi-Year Plan, which should clearly define how this level of athlete fits into the National Team Program.

D cards are generally allocated to sports in which the technical complexity or training cycle is such that athletes must follow sophisticated programs for many years before attaining international standards at the senior level and where it is in the best interest of the athlete and the sport to bring the athlete under the auspices of the NSO and the National Team Program.

D cards are intended to support the developmental needs of athletes who clearly demonstrate A-card potential. Athletes at the developmental level who have not clearly demonstrated A-card potential should be supported by provincial AAP programs. In addition, if the development needs of the athlete would be largely met by existing club/provincial programming and related assistance opportunities, the athlete would generally not be considered for Sport Canada AAP support.

D cards will be offered to a sport only in cases where the majority of the following considerations are satisfactorily met:

- Only athletes identified or endorsed for nomination as D cards by the National Coach (or comparable NSO Technical expert) will be considered for support by Sport Canada. The National Coach or designate must make a formal written assessment and recommendation on behalf of the athlete.
- The athlete must have an annual training and competitive program based on year-round training principles that is designed, supervised and monitored by the NSO National Coach or designate. This training program should include international competition, adequate domestic competition and significant daily training activities.
- The NSO must signify its intent and ability (in human, program and financial resource terms) to make a long-term commitment to D-card athletes, and vice versa.
- As program monies may not always be available to cover the cost of athletes holding D cards, athletes should understand that they may be asked to contribute to program costs from their D-card funding.
- NSOs will be expected to demonstrate how and with what specific human and financial resources they will facilitate and direct the long-term development of athletes on whose behalf they are applying for D cards.
- Consideration will also be given to the NSO's demonstrated ability to develop A-card athletes through its programming and leadership and the demonstrated capability of the NSO to apply this expertise to the athletes nominated as D cards.

What Are the Criteria for D Cards?

Athletes should generally meet the following criteria before being considered for D carding:

- finish in the top third of their field in a world championship at the junior level;
- finish in the top 4, 6, or 8 in a world championship at the junior level, with the finish depending on the number of entries per country, as follows —
  - in events limited to one entry per country, finish in the top 4;
  - in events limited to two entries per country, finish in the top 6;
  - in events with three or more entries per country, finish in the top 8;
- have a record of international and domestic success; and
- exhibit dominant domestic results in their sport or event OR have been a national junior champion.

Are There Sport-Specific Criteria?

Yes. Each NSO can negotiate sport-specific criteria for D cards with Sport Canada. The criteria must be objective and must clearly demonstrate that the athlete has superior high-performance potential. In addition to using international and domestic

results in the development of sport-specific criteria, NSOs may use other physical or physiological parameters. Measures of technical ability and skill levels may also be used.

The NSO must demonstrate that the majority of the requirements outlined in the previous section and in the general considerations outlined above are in place.

How Long Are D Cards Good For?

D cards are initially awarded for one year. However, Sport Canada is aware that multi-year financial and technical support of young high-performance athletes is necessary to ensure that they develop to the best of their potential. Sport Canada also recognizes that these athletes may not have an opportunity to requalify for a D card in a Junior World Championship each year. Sport Canada therefore provides up to three years of support for a D-card athlete once he or she has met the initial criteria.

Support in subsequent years is based on an assessment of the athlete's progress in physical and technical training, as well as on an assessment of the athlete's international and domestic competitive results.

4.3 Carding Criteria Specific to Team Sports

Certain carding criteria are specific to team sports. This section covers those criteria as they apply to A, B, C, R and J cards, as well as general considerations regarding carding for team sports.

General Considerations

- AAP support for team sport carding is intended to help *support* athletes already at or having the potential to reach A and B levels; it is not the purpose of the Athlete Assistance Program simply to *reward* individuals who make a commitment to a national team program during the summer months.
- Sport Canada's AAP must be fair to athletes in both an individual or team sport. It must also be recognized that in team sport there are "role players" who may not be among the top players in the country in terms of scoring, for example, but who nevertheless fulfil a specific function on the team and are essential to the successful performance of the team. In other words, some subjectivity is typically necessary in the selection of a team.
- Increasingly, NSOs want to provide programs for athletes below the SENIOR national team level. To ensure the commitment of these athletes to centralized training, the NSO, through the AAP, may need to expedite the provision of financial support to these athletes while they are participating in national team programs. This type of assistance is also provided to ensure continued participation by Canadian athletes in the Canadian sport system.
- There is a requirement for full-time centralization for long periods in some sports. However, it is acknowledged that some team sport athletes may need to remain in their home environment for legitimate personal, educational or professional reasons. On the recommendation of the national coach, these athletes may be eligible for a reduced level of carding support (R level) while they stay in their normal home location (i.e., away from the National Team Centre).
- The monitoring and availability of team-sport athletes is a key issue in the provision of AAP support. Sport Canada may provide AAP support to team sport

athletes while they are participating in competitive situations outside Canada, provided they are being monitored by their NSO and have the support of the National Coach. These situations are generally handled on a sport-by-sport, individual basis.

- Generally, no athlete receiving Provincial Athlete Assistance will be eligible for national carding. NSOs are expected to negotiate a better fit between national and provincial athlete assistance in collaboration with their provincial affiliates.
- At the annual AAP Review Meeting, the NSO will present results and evaluations of the previous year's programs to ensure it has met the agreed-to standards. The NSO will then identify the annual program for all teams and athletes for which carding is requested and will indicate the detailed year-round training and competition programs and the process for monitoring athlete training and performance.

A, B and C Cards

National Senior Team

A-, B-, C- and C-1 carding levels are assigned to athletes who are members of the National Senior Team. These cards are based on performance of the team and the contribution of each athlete to that performance. C cards are awarded to athletes who are members of National Senior Teams who have not yet reached the performance criteria for A- or B-card status. C-1 cards are for C-level athletes in their first year of National Senior Team carding.

A, B, C or C-1 funding is available only to athletes involved with National Team programming, as outlined by the NSO. For this reason, athletes unable to commit to all portions of the program may be carded, if they are a member of the National Team in the view of the NSO and National Coach, at the A, B, C or C-1 level, but they will usually not be eligible for full funding or funding at that carding level.

Athletes who are available to train or play with national teams on a limited basis may be supported while they are with the National Team at the usual stipend level based on athlete/team performance, provided the athlete commits to involvement with the team for the major events of the quadrennial (i.e., the Olympic Games and related qualification events). This provision would normally be applied to athletes playing outside Canada.

Centralized athletes still recommended for carding on an ongoing basis by the National Coach who wish to leave the National Training Centre for academic or other acceptable reasons will be eligible for financial support only at the R level. Athletes supported under this provision must make a commitment to an approved training program and to participation in the major competitive events of the quadrennial (World Championships, Olympic Qualification tournaments, Olympics, etc.).

R and J Cards

Additional AAP support to individuals on teams below the Senior National Team level may be provided at the R or J level to eligible NSOs on the basis of the AAP Card Allocation Formula and the following:

- the demonstrated ability of the NSO to deliver comprehensive and quality programming;

- the scope and intensity of the programs offered at the various levels of the high-performance system and the scope and intensity of the individual athlete training and competitive demands; and
- the ability of the NSO to supervise and monitor the day-to-day training of its athletes on an annual basis.

R Cards

This level of card is available to athletes in Olympic team sports who are members of the National A team training squad or who are members of a Sport Canada supported Universiade or National B Team.

This level of card is not available to all team sports but may be available if the NSO satisfies the general requirements and minimum standards outlined below.

J Cards

This level of card is available to athletes in Olympic team sports and is awarded to athletes on Sport Canada supported Junior National Teams who make a significant commitment to the Junior National Team Program. This level of card will not be available to all team sports but may be available if the NSO satisfies the general requirements and minimum standards outlined below.

General Requirements for R and J Cards

R or J team cards are available only to athletes required to be involved in competition and training programs under the auspices of the NSO for significant time periods during the summer. Depending on the intensity and duration of the program, R and J team carding support will vary. It may include monthly stipends and tuition support or combinations thereof. The duration and intensity of team camps/competition tours will determine whether athletes receive monthly stipends only or monthly stipends plus tuition support, as well as the number of months per year for which such support will be provided.

The NSO should make an advance commitment to operate these programs as outlined in the NSO Multi-year Plan. If these commitments are not sustained, Sport Canada may withdraw AAP support for athletes in these programs.

In years when the Junior or National B Team programs are limited, carding support may not be available. National A team training squad members may be eligible for R- or J-card support if minimum program requirements are met.

In general, Sport Canada will consider Junior/National B Team carding only in sports where there is an intent (for example, a program outline and budget allocation) and where funding is available to undertake significant Junior or National B Team programs or both throughout the quadrennial and where there is a logical flow without gap from Junior Team to the National Team or from Junior to National B Team to the National Senior Team.

Minimum Standards for R and J Cards

To be eligible to receive full funding at the R- or J-card level (12 months of living and training allowance plus tuition where applicable), the following minimum standards must be in place:

- A National Team summer program of a minimum duration of sixty (60) days must be in place. The program must consist of a minimum of four (4) hours of team practice daily and should include a minimum of one tournament or four games of international competition during or following the sixty-day training period.
- All athletes must be involved in year-round intensive training programs that are supervised or monitored by the NSO National Coach or designate.
- A monitoring plan for each athlete that will allow for an evaluation of each athlete's individual training plan and progress must be in place.

Note: Reduced support may be provided for programs that last for a minimum of thirty (30) days and meet the additional minimum standards outlined above.

Centralization of R and J Carded Athletes

R or J team athletes who agree to centralize at a national team centre on a year-round basis at the request of the NSO/National Coach may be eligible for carding at the regular, training centre card level.

Section 5 Financial Benefits

The AAP provides several kinds of financial benefits to eligible athletes. For example, the program offers living and training allowances, tuition support and support for child-care expenses. This section presents detailed information on eligibility for AAP financial benefits and describes how to apply for specific benefits.

5.1 What Financial Benefits Are Available?

The AAP offers three main types of financial support to eligible athletes:

- living and training allowance;
- tuition support, including deferred tuition support; and
- special-needs assistance.

5.2 Living and Training Allowance

Athletes approved by Sport Canada for the AAP are eligible for a living and training allowance. This assistance is usually paid in advance every other month.

The support paid varies with the athlete's carding status:

Carding Status	Monthly Allowance ($)
A	810
B	685
C	560
C-1	435
D	375
TC	375
R	310
J	185

5.3 Tuition Support

Sport Canada provides tuition support to athletes able to attend school *and* meet high-performance training and competition requirements. This support is available *during the period the athlete is carded.*

Tuition support also takes the form of *deferred* tuition support. This AAP option provides *tuition credits* to carded athletes for each year they are carded and allows them to use these credits when they have retired from sport or are no longer carded.

Sport Canada's Deferred Tuition Program became effective September 1, 1995. *Deferred tuition policies are not applicable before that date.*

Note: AAP tuition support applies only to *post-secondary* schooling.

What Schools Are Eligible for Tuition Support?

- Canadian publicly supported universities or colleges and public CEGEPs are eligible for tuition support.

- Other institutions, such as correspondence schools or private colleges (physiotherapy colleges, for example), *may* be eligible for tuition support, but Sport Canada must approve them for tuition support on a case-by-case basis.

Note: Private schools below the post-secondary level are *not* eligible for tuition support.

Is Tuition Support Available for Schools Outside Canada?

Not usually.

Exceptions are made *for athletic reasons only* and must have the full support of the NSO and be approved by Sport Canada. In addition, the athlete must be able to maintain his or her full training and competitive commitments to the satisfaction of the NSO and Sport Canada, and the NSO must show that it has in place a system for monitoring athletes while they train outside Canada.

What Schools Are Eligible for Deferred Tuition Support?

- Post-secondary educational institutions are eligible for deferred tuition support.

What Programs Are Eligible for Tuition Support?

- Full-time or part-time degree, diploma or certificate programs *at eligible schools* are eligible for tuition support. Degree programs may be undergraduate, graduate, or professional.
- Courses that are legitimate credits toward apprenticeships in trades or professions or correspondence courses leading to a legitimate degree, diploma or certificate *may* be eligible for tuition support.

What Programs Are Eligible for Deferred Tuition Support?

- Deferred tuition can be accessed only to complete an undergraduate degree.
- Deferred tuition credits cannot normally be applied to graduate courses. However, exceptions *may* be considered in a pre-Olympic year. **An athlete in a graduate program who wants to train full-time in a pre-Olympic year must apply in writing to Sport Canada for deferred tuition support, and the athlete's NSO must support the application.** If the application is accepted, tuition from the pre-Olympic year can be deferred until the athlete retires or is no longer carded.

How Much Tuition Support Is Available?

- Carded athletes are eligible for tuition support at a post-secondary institution for each year they are carded.
- The maximum allowable tuition support is as follows:
  - college/CEGEP/apprenticeship: 4 full-time semesters or equivalent (unless the standard program length exceeds 2 years);
  - university undergraduate degree: 8 full-time semesters or equivalent; and
  - university graduate degree: 8 full-time semesters or equivalent.
- Tuition support for private schools or schools outside Canada cannot exceed the average tuition fees of publicly funded universities or colleges in the athlete's home province or territory.
- Athletes who have completed a college, university or professional degree will not

be eligible for tuition support toward a second analogous degree. This restriction applies to both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

- Tuition for graduate degrees is generally available only while an athlete is carded.

Note: AAP tuition support is subject to predetermined semester and course limits, for example, ten (10) semester courses per athlete per year or forty (40) undergraduate semester courses per athlete. Sport Canada further expects athletes to *successfully* complete the courses they receive support for. Athletes who do not do so therefore risk accessing all the tuition support they are eligible for *before* completing their degree, diploma or certificate program.

How Much Deferred Tuition Support Is Available?

- Athletes who do *not* access tuition support in a year they are carded are eligible for deferred tuition credits for that year.
- Athletes are allowed to defer a maximum of two full-time semester credits (five courses per semester) for each year they are carded to a maximum of eight full-time semester credits. For example, an athlete who attends school part-time and takes two courses in a semester is eligible for three courses in deferred tuition credits for that semester when he or she retires or is no longer carded.
- The *monetary value* of one deferred tuition credit equals the average cost of full-time tuition in an AAP-eligible program at a Canadian publicly funded AAP-eligible school for the carding year for which the deferred credit is awarded divided by the average number of courses in eligible programs.
- The *monetary value* of deferred tuition credits can be applied to completing an undergraduate degree when the athlete retires or is no longer carded. Given recent increases in tuition costs, the monetary value of the deferred credits may cover fewer courses than the credits were awarded for.
- Athletes who have accessed the equivalent of eight full-time semesters of tuition while carded or who have an undergraduate university degree are not eligible for deferred tuition credits. However, athletes who have NOT accessed the equivalent of eight full-time semesters of tuition support may access deferred tuition credits for professional degrees (for example, law or medical degrees).
- Deferred tuition credits may be accessed in any year an athlete is not carded, provided that year is within five years of the last year of carding support.

What Is the Application/Payment Procedure for Tuition Support?

1. NSOs indicate in their annual AAP submission to Sport Canada whether an athlete is requesting tuition support.
2. Sport Canada determines which tuition requests to approve.
3. Sport Canada provides a *tuition voucher* to the athlete's NSO.
4. The NSO provides the tuition voucher to the athlete.
5. The athlete fills in the tuition voucher and submits it to his or her school. The athlete must list each AAP-supported course on his or her voucher, as well as the fee for each course.
6. The school sends Sport Canada a bill for the courses listed on the athlete's voucher, as well as a copy of the voucher.

If it is not possible for Sport Canada to pay tuition directly to the athlete's school, Sport Canada will reimburse the athlete after receiving an *original* registration receipt

indicating what courses the athlete has registered for and what the fee for each course is.

Note: Athletes who receive an academic award from a Canadian school are eligible for tuition assistance unless that award is designated specifically for tuition.

What Is the Application/Payment Procedure for Deferred Tuition?

1. The athlete advises his or her NSO in writing that he or she wishes to access the AAP Deferred Tuition Program. The NSO endorses this application before sending it to the AAP.
2. The athlete also submits a current, official student transcript from his or her school(s) and completes the Deferred Tuition Form, which is available from the NSO.
3. On receiving this information, Sport Canada reviews the athlete's file and decides the number of eligible Deferred Tuition credits the athlete is eligible for, as well as the monetary value of these credits.
4. The athlete submits an official, original registration receipt to the AAP. This may take the form of a transcript stamped by the school indicating payments made or a written receipt on official school letterhead.

Note: The AAP does not make payment directly to the athlete's school.

5. The AAP pays the athlete up to the monetary value of the deferred tuition credit(s) the athlete is eligible for.

5.4 Special-Needs Assistance

Certain special needs have been recognized by Sport Canada as deserving of support under the AAP. All special-needs requests from athletes must initially be sent to the NSO for recommendation. Generally, special-needs requests are considered only from athletes for whom AAP support is their primary or major source of income or for athletes who must relocate for sport purposes.

Athletes requesting special-needs assistance will be subject to an assessment of financial means. All special-needs requests must be approved in advance by the AAP Manager and be for the current carding year.

The assessment of financial means will require a statement of the athlete's annual income as well as documentation indicating the athlete's annual expenses, including rent, food, transportation and sport-related expenses. The statement of income and expenses must be verified and approved by the NSO as part of the request for special-needs assistance.

If Sport Canada determines that the athlete can adequately support the special needs for which he or she is requesting support, no support for the request will be approved.

The following expense areas are to be covered by the athlete through monthly allowances or other sources and are NOT considered special needs:

- food supplements and vitamins;
- local transportation;

- training equipment and clothing;
- personal clothing;
- food and rent (including phone, hydro, etc.);
- club fees;
- coaching expenses;
- medical, dental, physiotherapy or chiropractic expenses; and
- lost-time expenses (any lost wages are expected to be covered through the monthly living and training allowance).

Eligible Special Needs

Eligible special needs include child-care expenses, relocation assistance and retirement assistance.

Child-Care Expenses

When an athlete is required to obtain the services of a baby-sitter to attend approved training or competitions, the following may be paid:

- up to $25 per day when the NSO certifies that the athlete is required to be absent from home to attend approved training or competition and no member of the family or other ongoing daycare service (including nannies) is available to provide the baby-sitting service.

The athlete must provide original receipts for expenses incurred and should not have claimed this expense for income-tax purposes.

Child-care assistance is limited to a maximum of $800 per carding year.

Relocation Assistance

When carded members of a national team are required to move to or from an approved National Team Training Centre, Sport Canada may assist in offsetting some of the relocation costs.

Such assistance is generally limited to one-half of actual relocation expenses, to a maximum of $500 per move. Also, Sport Canada will cover only two moves during an athlete's career: from home to the training centre and from the training centre to the athlete's home on retirement.

Retirement Assistance

Athletes who have been carded for a minimum of three years may receive some readjustment support through a special-needs application.

Section 6 Application Procedure and Responsibilities

This section describes in detail how to apply for AAP support. It answers specific questions about how to apply for AAP support, and it details the responsibilities of all parties to an application for such support:

- Who applies for AAP support?
- How and when?
- What's in the submission package?
- What are the athlete's responsibilities?
- What are the NSO's responsibilities?
- What are Sport Canada's responsibilities?

6.1 Who Applies for AAP Support?

The athlete *and* his or her NSO:

- The athlete completes all appropriate application forms and submits them to the NSO.
- The NSO then applies to Sport Canada for AAP support on behalf of the individual athlete.

6.2 How and When?

NSOs prepare a submission package (see Section 6.3) and schedule a review of this package with their Sport Canada Consultant. These review meetings occur annually, and NSOs apply annually.

It is the NSO's responsibility to schedule the review meeting. To ensure that funding to carded athletes is not interrupted, the NSO and Sport Canada should schedule this meeting so that it occurs at least three weeks before the end of the NSO carding cycle.

NSOs should send a copy of the entire submission package (see section 6.3) to both their Sport Canada Consultant *and* the Manager of the AAP. Each should receive a submission package at least five working days before the AAP review meeting.

6.3 What's in the Submission Package?

Individual-sport NSOs and team-sport NSOs prepare *almost* the same submission package:

- covering letter — same for both; see the section "Covering Letter";
- table of contents — same for both; see the section "Table of Contents";
- summary of athletes' results — same for both; see the section "Summary of Athletes' Results";
- National Team depth chart — team sports only; see the section "National Team Depth Chart";
- recommendations for carding — same for both; see the section "Recommendations for Carding";
- recommendations for non-renewal of carding — same for both; see the section "Recommendations for Non-renewal of Carding";
- outline of the National Team's competitive and training program — same for both; see the section "Outline of the National Team's Competitive and Training Program";
- recommendations for changes in carding criteria — same for both; see the section "Recommendations for Changes in Carding Criteria";
- recommendations for changes in carding-cycle dates — same for both; see the section "Recommendations for Changes in Carding-Cycle Dates"; and
- athlete/NSO agreement — same for both; see the Athlete/NSO Agreement.

Covering Letter

- Prepared by the NSO contact responsible for managing the NSO's AAP.
- Indicate any changes from previous submissions (requests for changes in carding criteria, for changes in carding-cycle dates, for more cards, etc.).
- Outline any AAP issues that could be contentious in the upcoming year.

Table of Contents

- List the entire contents of the submission package.

Summary of Athletes' Results

- Include results of *all* Canadian athletes — whether or not they are members of the National Team, whether or not they are nominees for carding — at World Championships and major games.
- Also include results from applicable world championships (Senior, Junior or Espoir) and major games.
- Consider including results of other major international events.
- Present on the generic Sport Canada form (see page 6-4) or any other form that provides the same information. Sport Canada provides its form to NSOs on request.

National Team Depth Chart

- Provide a depth chart of the National Team by position that includes all athletes selected to the National Team and nominated for carding. If possible, include all athletes who are members of the R or J team. Include a description of the method used to select the athletes and a ranking summary.

Recommendations for Carding

- List athletes recommended for carding in the order of priority established by the NSO according to approved carding criteria. Include athletes recommended for carding for the first time and those being recommended for re-carding. Indicate the level of card for which an athlete is being nominated, as well as the rationale for carding. **For team sports, this list should generally reflect the National Team depth chart.**
- Include the following in the rationale for carding an individual athlete:
  - a complete summary of the athlete's competitive results (important international and domestic results, including National Championships) in the previous year. Results should be in chronological order, and the summary should highlight results demonstrating that the athlete has met the carding criteria agreed to by the NSO and Sport Canada.
  - a written appraisal of the athlete.
- For team sports, use the format presented on page 6-5.

Recommendations for Non-renewal of Carding

- List *all* athletes not being renominated for carding, as well as the reason(s) for this decision (the athlete did not meet the carding criteria, the athlete retired, etc.).

Outline of the National Team's Competitive and Training Program

- Include a detailed outline of the National Team competitive and training program for the next year, as outlined in the NSO's multi-year and annual plans. If applicable, include R or J team programs.
- If they are available, submit individual athletes' competitive and training programs. Be prepared to discuss how carded athletes' training and competitive programs are monitored.

Recommendations for Changes in Carding Criteria

- Include all recommendations for changes in carding criteria for the next carding cycle, along with the rationale for these changes.

Recommendations for Changes in Carding-Cycle Dates

- Include all recommendations for changes in the dates of the next carding cycle, along with the rationale for these changes.

Athlete/NSO Agreement

Include the current Athlete/NSO Agreement, as well as any proposed changes.

All changes being proposed must be approved by the appropriate NSO committee and endorsed by the athletes' designated representative.

Summary of Athletes' Results, World Championships

Sport:
Competition:
Date :
Location:

Event	*Athlete*	*Rank*	*Number of Entries*	*Number of Countries*	*Standard (distance, time, etc.)*	Top Eight Countries							
						1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*

Athlete Nomination for Carding, Team Sport

Athlete's name: _____

Athlete's date of birth: _____

Number of years athlete carded: _____

Athlete's present carding status: _____

Athlete's playing position: _____

Athlete's rank at position: _____

Athlete's rank on team: _____

Athlete's personal coach: _____

Athlete's training location: _____

Athlete's club/team: _____

Athlete's occupational status: _____

Athlete's university/school (if applicable): _____

How will the athlete's training be monitored? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The following information may also be presented, depending on the sophistication of the NSO's team-selection process and ability to gather relevant game statistics:

- any relevant physical statistics (height, weight, etc.); and
- any relevant "game stats" for each athlete.

6.4 What are the Athlete's Responsibilities?

Athletes applying for AAP support commit to the following responsibilities:

- to provide true statements in their application and supporting documentation and to verify these statements if requested by Sport Canada.
- to adhere to the competitive and training program and administrative requirements specified by their NSO throughout the cycle for which they are carded.
- to refund any assistance provided if their eligibility status changes or their carding status is withdrawn. This refund will be effective the date their eligibility status changes or their carding status is withdrawn. Such refunds are payable to Canada's Receiver General.
- to abide by the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport and the policy of the NSO related to the use of banned performance-enhancing substances, doping controls and sporting contacts with other countries.
- to participate in sport-related, non-commercial, promotional activities on behalf of the Government of Canada. Sport Canada usually makes the request for participation, and the athlete's NSO generally makes the detailed arrangements. Unless supplementary compensation is arranged, these activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year.
- to communicate regularly with the NSO using the reporting mechanism specified in the NSO's athlete monitoring plan. Communication may occur directly or through the athlete's personal coach.
- to immediately advise Sport Canada, through their NSO, of any change of address. This is needed to ensure timely receipt of AAP cheques and program information.
- to initiate any AAP-related appeal directly with their NSO. Athletes may request that Sport Canada review such AAP-related decisions *after* their appeal to their NSO is complete.

6.5 What are the NSO's Responsibilities?

NSOs applying for AAP support on behalf of an athlete agree to do the following:

- produce and provide to the athlete a copy of the NSO's *National Team Handbook*. The guide must be in the official language of the athlete's choice, and it must cover *at least* the following:
  - Sport-Canada-approved NSO carding criteria to be used for nominating athletes for the AAP;
  - procedures to be used when developing carding nominations;
  - all relevant internal administrative policies and procedures;
  - criteria and procedures for selection to National Team competitive opportunities and training camps;
  - discipline and appeals procedures; and
  - credit to the Government of Canada for the funding provided to athletes and NSOs through Sport Canada.
- submit all nominations for carding at least three weeks before the beginning of the NSO's carding cycle. The NSO provides these nominations to Sport Canada through the appropriate Sport Canada Consultant and the AAP Manager (see Section 6.2).

- provide athletes with forms required for the AAP, including tuition vouchers and application forms.
- review and recommend requests for special-needs assistance and deferred tuition. Recommendations should be forwarded to the Sport Canada AAP Manager.
- ensure that each carded athlete adheres to an NSO-approved competition and training plan throughout the carding cycle. At a minimum, this requires monthly contact with each athlete.
- advise the AAP Manager immediately if a carded athlete fails to honor his or her AAP commitments.
- inform Sport Canada in a timely manner of an athlete's retirement. If the NSO fails in this regard and the athlete subsequently receives excess AAP benefits, it is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate return of that overpayment to Sport Canada. The NSO is also responsible for facilitating the return of any funding provided to an athlete that is the result of a false application or fraudulent misrepresentation on the part of the athlete or the NSO.
- develop discipline and appeal procedures based on due process that include access to **independent arbitration**.
- provide Sport Canada with written confirmation that all carded athletes have signed their Athlete/NSO Agreement. This must occur within two (2) months of the start of the NSO's carding cycle. The Agreement is not considered signed if any sections have been deleted or altered in any way. Athletes for whom Sport Canada has not received signing confirmation from the NSO may have their AAP payments suspended until the NSO confirms in writing that the Agreement is signed. The decision to suspend AAP payments of athletes who have not signed their Agreement will be made in consultation with the NSO, and the NSO will advise Sport Canada why the Agreement has not been signed.

Note: It is strongly recommended that all NSOs ensure all carded athletes have inside-Canada and outside-Canada medical and dental insurance.

6.6 What are Sport Canada's Responsibilities?

In accepting applications for AAP support, Sport Canada agrees to do the following:

- review all applications for AAP support endorsed by the NSO.
- approve and arrange payments in accordance with AAP regulations.
- advise NSOs and athletes regarding the development and approval of carding criteria, athlete agreements, appeals procedures and due process, athlete monitoring and other areas of athlete assistance and related services as requested by the NSO or athletes or both.
- provide NSOs with AAP materials (application forms, the booklet *Athlete Assistance Program Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*, tuition vouchers, athlete nomination forms, etc.).
- work with NSOs to ensure that due process is followed in the selection of athletes for athlete assistance, as well as in discipline and appeal matters.
- adjudicate AAP-related disputes between an athlete and his or her NSO if asked to do so by an athlete or an NSO or both.
- provide a review procedure to both athletes and NSOs on any AAP decision. Requests for review of AAP decisions are directed to the Manager of the AAP, who forwards the requests to the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee for a

decision. When requests for reviews are received directly from athletes, Sport Canada first seeks the opinion of the NSO; Sport Canada *may* then ask the NSO to provide a hearing to the athlete on the issue in question. Decisions of Sport Canada's AAP Review Committee are final.

Section 7 Guidelines for the Athlete/NSO Agreement

The AAP requires that all carded athletes and their NSOs sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement that clearly defines the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete *and* the NSO. This section answers the following questions about what the Agreement should be like:

- What is the purpose of the Athlete/NSO Agreement?
- What does the Agreement specify?
- How is the Agreement developed?
- What happens if the Agreement isn't signed?

7.1 What is the Purpose of the Athlete/NSO Agreement?

The purpose of the Athlete/NSO Agreement is to set down in writing the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete and the NSO.

7.2 What Does the Agreement Specify?

The Agreement must clearly specify the following:

- benefits available to the carded athlete through his or her NSO.
- the NSO's obligations.
- the athlete's obligations, including a commitment to follow an agreed-upon training and competitive program.
- any other commitments to the NSO that the carded athlete is required to make (for instance, time, promotional activities or financial commitments).
- the Agreement's duration (not to exceed one carding year).
- specific Sport Canada and NSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, including the following:
  - the NSO's anti-doping policy;
  - the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport; and
  - federal government policies regarding where competition is not permitted.
- the hearing and appeal procedure that will be used in any dispute between the carded athlete and the NSO. This procedure must conform with natural justice and due process.
- details, if applicable, of the carded athlete's trust fund.
- the lead time for the publication of selection criteria (i.e., how far ahead of the next carding cycle the selection criteria will be published).

Note: All clauses in the Agreement must clearly define the athlete's expected behavior. The Agreement must be in plain, understandable language, not legal jargon. Basic rights such as freedom of speech and confidentiality of medical records must be respected.

7.3 How Is the Agreement Developed?

1. A generic Athlete/NSO Agreement is approved by the NSO and the athletes' elected representative on the NSO's Board of Directors (or another appropriate committee).
2. The generic Agreement is modified as required. For example, individual athletes

may need to modify or negotiate specific clauses to fit their situation.

To facilitate the development of fair and comprehensive Athlete/NSO Agreements, Sport Canada has developed a model agreement (see page 7-3) that sports can use as a starting point for their agreements. Some items in the model agreement are not applicable to all sports, and some items important to specific sports may be missing. Athlete/NSO Agreements should be modified as needed to reflect the individual sport's characteristics and the individual athlete's needs.

7.4 What Happens If the Agreement Isn't Signed?

It is the NSO's responsibility to ensure that all carded athletes sign their Athlete/NSO Agreement. Within two months of the start of the NSO's carding cycle, the NSO must provide Sport Canada with written confirmation that all carded athletes have signed their Athlete/NSO Agreement. Athletes for whom Sport Canada has not received signing confirmation from the NSO may have their AAP payments suspended until the NSO confirms in writing that the Agreement is signed.

Under certain conditions, the *NSO* may request that carding payments be withheld until the athlete has signed his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement. If this occurs, it is still the responsibility of the NSO to inform Sport Canada that the Agreement has been signed and to request that the athlete's carding payments start.

Model Athlete/NSO Agreement

AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____ , 199__

BETWEEN

_____, having its national office at _____ (hereinafter referred to as "the NSO")

AND

_____, residing at _____ (hereinafter referred to as "the Athlete").

WHEREAS the Athlete wishes to be an active competitor in NSO-sanctioned events with his or her rights and obligations clearly defined;

WHEREAS the NSO is recognized by _____ (the NSO's International Federation) and Sport Canada as the sole National Federation governing the sport of _____ in Canada;

WHEREAS the NSO and _____ recognize the need to clarify the relationship between the NSO and the Athlete by establishing their respective rights and obligations;

AND WHEREAS the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (hereinafter referred to as "the AAP") requires these rights and obligations to be stated in a written agreement to be signed by the NSO and the Athlete who applies for assistance under the AAP;

AND WHEREAS the International Federation requires that the NSO certify the eligibility of the Athlete to compete as a member in good standing;

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree to the following:

NSO Obligations

1. **The NSO shall:**

a. organize, select and operate teams of athletes, coaches and other necessary support staff (a National Team) to represent Canada in the sport of _____ throughout the world;

b. publish reasonable selection criteria for all national teams at least three (3) months before the selection for any particular team and at least eight (8) months before the selection of major games teams (e.g., Olympic, Commonwealth, Pan American, FISU) and World Championship Teams;

c. conduct selection of members to all national teams in a manner that is in conformity with the generally accepted principles of natural justice and procedural fairness;

d. nominate all athletes eligible for the AAP and thereafter ensure these athletes will receive all the benefits to which they are entitled under the AAP;

e. publish reasonable criteria for the selection of athletes to the AAP ten (10) months before the start of the AAP eligibility cycle for the particular sport;

f. organize programs and provide funding for the development and provision of coaching expertise, officials and event training centres in Canada in the sport of _____ in accordance with the budget of the NSO;

g. assist the Athlete in obtaining quality medical care and advice;

h. provide the Athlete selected to be a member of the National Team with the National Team uniform;

i. protect the eligibility of the Athlete by ensuring that a mechanism for the establishment of a trust fund for the Athlete exists that is in accordance with International Federation rules and advise the Athlete of the nature of all payments to and withdrawals from the trust fund;

j. regularly provide National Team program information (training and competition) to the Athlete in the form of mailed correspondence;

k. provide a formal review of the Athlete's annual training program;

l. provide funding for the Athlete for training camps and competitions in accordance with the budget of the NSO;

m. provide for a representative elected by the athletes to sit as a voting member of the relevant decision-making body of the NSO (for example, the Board of Directors or National Team Committee); and

n. provide a hearing and appeal procedure that is in conformity with the generally accepted principles of natural justice and due process **and includes access to an independent arbitration process** with respect to any dispute the Athlete may have with the NSO; publish the details of this procedure in a prominent manner; and provide details to any person requesting this information by or on behalf of the Athlete.

Athlete's Obligations

2. The Athlete shall:

a. recognizing the responsibilities of the coaches in coaching-related decisions, follow the training and competitive program mutually agreed to by the following:

— the NSO representative responsible for developing and monitoring National Team training and competitive programs (the National Coach or High Performance Director, for example);

— the Athlete's personal coach; and

— the Athlete;

b. avoid living in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievements or taking any deliberate action that puts his or her ability to perform at risk or limits performance;

c. provide the National Coach or his or her designate, by mail sent to the National Office, with an annual training chart and monthly updates of changes to the chart or any other appropriate information that the NSO may request;

d. subject to paragraph 2(e), participate in all mandatory training camps and competitions as described in Appendix A (of this Agreement);

e. notify the NSO immediately in writing of any injury or other legitimate reason that will prevent the Athlete from participating in an upcoming event referred to in Appendix A (of this Agreement) and ensure in the case of an injury that a certificate from a medical doctor setting out the specific nature of the injury is forwarded to the NSO within three weeks of the injury;

f. dress in the National Team uniform and other official clothing, if applicable, while travelling or participating as part of the National Team;

g. avoid any action or conduct that would reasonably be expected to significantly disrupt or interfere with a competition or the preparation of any Athlete for a competition;

h. during or at National Team training camps and competitions, avoid alcoholic consumption to a level that would reasonably be expected to impair the Athlete's ability to speak, walk or drive, or cause the Athlete to behave in a disruptive manner;

i. avoid the use of banned substances that contravene the rules of the IOC, the rules of the International Federation and the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport;

j. submit, without prior warning, to unannounced doping-control tests in addition to other prior-notice tests and submit at other times to doping-control testing when requested by the NSO, Sport Canada, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) or other authorities designated to do so;

k. avoid the possession of anabolic drugs and neither supply such drugs to others *directly or indirectly* nor encourage or condone their use by knowingly aiding in any effort to avoid detection of the use of banned substances or banned

performance-enhancing practices;

l. participate, if asked by the NSO to do so, in any Doping Control/Education Program developed by the NSO in co-operation with Sport Canada and the CCES;

m. avoid participating in any competitions where federal government sport policy has determined that such participation is not permitted;

n. participate in sport-related, non-commercial promotional activities on behalf of the Government of Canada. The NSO usually makes such requests for participation and arranges the activities. Unless supplementary compensation is arranged, these activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year;

o. participate in the NSO Athlete Health Monitoring Program if requested to do so by the NSO; and

p. use the hearing and appeal procedure referred to in paragraph 1(n) for remedy of complaints and issues, especially where the situation involves the conduct or performance of NSO-employed staff or coaches.

Default of Agreement

3. Where one of the parties to this agreement is of the opinion that the other party has failed to conform with its obligations under this agreement, it shall forthwith:

a. notify that party in writing of the alleged default;

b. **where applicable,** indicate in the notice to that party the steps to be taken to remedy the situation; and

c. **where applicable,** indicate in the notice a reasonable period of time within which such steps shall be taken.

On AAP-related matters, the Athlete may direct such notice to the Manager of the Sport Canada AAP, who may act on behalf of the Athlete and indicate to the NSO the steps to take to remedy the situation.

Where the party that has given the notice referred to in paragraph 3(a) is of the opinion that the other party has not remedied the situation, it shall file a complaint through the hearing and appeal procedure referred to in paragraph 1(n).

Duration of Agreement

This AGREEMENT comes into force on the _____ day of _____ , 199__, and terminates on the _____ day of _____ , 199__ .

Athlete Declaration

I hereby declare that in return for any financial assistance provided by the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program, I undertake to fulfil all commitments and responsibilities outlined in the booklet *Athlete Assistance Program Policies, Procedures and Guidelines* and my Athlete/NSO Agreement. I agree to refund any assistance provided to me, payable to the Receiver General of Canada, should my eligibility status change or my carded status be withdrawn, effective the withdrawal/change of status date.

_____ (the NSO)

_____ _____ _____

Witness Date NSO Representative

_____ _____ _____

Witness Date Athlete

Section 8 Withdrawal of Carded Status

Athletes carded under Sport Canada's AAP may withdraw from the AAP or have their carded status withdrawn. Withdrawal of carded status renders athletes ineligible for AAP support for the remainder of the carding cycle.

This section explains why carded status may be withdrawn and how it is withdrawn; it also describes the procedure for reinstatement of AAP support.

Note: In many cases, the *NSO* recommends that carded status be withdrawn. However, *Sport Canada* may withdraw carded status. All cases where Sport Canada may withdraw carded status are noted in the following sections.

8.1 Why May Carded Status Be Withdrawn?

Carded status may be withdrawn for the following reasons:

- voluntary withdrawal/retirement;
- non-renewal of carded status;
- failure to meet training or competitive commitments;
- violation of the Athlete/NSO Agreement;
- athlete's failure to meet responsibilities outlined in the AAP guidelines;
- gross breach of discipline;
- fraudulent misrepresentation; and
- doping violations.

8.2 Voluntary Withdrawal/Retirement

Athletes may withdraw from the AAP by expressing their wish to do so to their NSO. This may involve retiring permanently *or* temporarily foregoing the commitments of carded status.

When the NSO is satisfied that the request for withdrawal is bona fide, the following must occur:

- The NSO must advise its Sport Canada consultant and the AAP Co-ordinator *in writing* of the effective date of withdrawal. If possible, the NSO will provide Sport Canada with a written declaration from the athlete confirming his or her withdrawal from the program and the reasons for the decision.
- Any allowances previously paid to the athlete for periods subsequent to the withdrawal date must be refunded by the athlete to Canada's Receiver General. It is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate the return of these funds.

If their NSO recommends it, athletes who retire permanently in mid-season may be allowed one month of AAP support past the date of their actual retirement to help them adjust to their post-athletic situation. This does not preclude the athlete from applying for or receiving special-needs assistance (see Section 5.4) or deferred tuition support (see Section 5.3).

Should an NSO fail to notify Sport Canada in a timely manner of an athlete's retirement and should this result in overpayment of AAP funds to that athlete, the NSO must facilitate the return of the overpaid funds to Sport Canada.

If *Sport Canada* wishes to withdraw an athlete's AAP support because the athlete has retired, the steps listed in Section 8.8, Fraudulent Misrepresentation, apply.

8.3 Non-renewal of Carded Status

Maintaining carded status depends on

- the NSO recommending re-nomination, based on the athlete's meeting approved carding criteria and continuing to improve performance; and
- Sport Canada approving the re-nomination during the NSO's annual AAP review meeting.

If either the NSO or Sport Canada decides to discontinue the carding of an athlete at the end of the carding cycle, the following must occur:

- The NSO must advise the athlete in writing that he or she has not been re-nominated. The reason(s) for the decision must be included in the notice.
- The NSO must advise the athlete about opportunities that are available, such as National Team program activities (camps, competitions, etc.), and provide details of the Deferred Tuition Program.
- The NSO must ensure access to an appeals process for athletes not nominated or re-nominated for carding. The athlete shall also have the right to request that Sport Canada review the NSO's decision. In any such review, Sport Canada will decide whether to provide AAP support to an athlete on the basis of written submissions from the NSO and the athlete.

Following the annual AAP review meeting, Sport Canada will inform, in writing, those athletes who have not been re-carded.

8.4 Failure to Meet Training or Competitive Commitments

Failure to meet agreed-to training or competitive commitments may include

- a decision by the athlete to live in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievement;
- any deliberate action by the athlete that significantly risks or limits performance; and
- an inability to meet the training and competition obligations outlined in the athlete's annual training/competitive plan or the Athlete/NSO Agreement for the particular carding cycle.

Note: Failure to achieve preset performance objectives does not in itself establish failure to meet agreed-to training or competitive commitments.

If an NSO wishes to recommend withdrawal of carded status for allegedly failing to meet agreed-to training and competitive commitments, the NSO must comply with the following:

- The NSO must advise its Sport Canada consultant and the AAP Manager *in writing* that it wishes to withdraw an athlete's carded status. The NSO must also indicate the grounds on which the recommendation is made.
- The AAP Manager must advise the athlete by registered mail of receipt of the recommendation from the NSO and will enclose a copy of the recommendation

in the letter to the athlete.

- Pending resolution of any appeal, Sport Canada will continue to provide the athlete with AAP allowances for a two-month period after the initial letter from the NSO to Sport Canada recommending withdrawal of carded status.
- The NSO must ensure that the athlete has been properly informed of the allegations against him or her and has been provided with the right to respond through the appropriate NSO appeals procedure.
- Should the appeal process continue for more than two months, Sport Canada will withhold further AAP allowances to the athlete pending final resolution of the matter.
- Following the completion of the NSO appeal procedure, the NSO will notify Sport Canada of the outcome of the appeal and make its recommendation to Sport Canada.
- If the NSO upholds the original recommendation to de-card the athlete, the athlete has the right to request a review of the decision by Sport Canada and has 30 days to make representations to Sport Canada regarding why it should not act on the recommendation of the NSO.
- The NSO must adhere to due process throughout.

If the athlete requests a review by Sport Canada, Sport Canada will, in due course, consider the recommendation of the NSO together with any representations made by or on behalf of the athlete and will provide a ruling on the matter. Sport Canada's decision is in all cases final and binding on both parties, and it will be communicated to the NSO and the athlete without delay after it has been made. Sport Canada will provide all parties with the reasons for its decision.

When Sport Canada considers the recommendation made by the NSO, it may

- accept the recommendation of the NSO and withdraw the carded status of the athlete;
- dismiss the recommendation altogether;
- dismiss the recommendation but impose some lesser penalty; and
- make additional recommendations to either party if it believes some useful purpose might be served by so doing.

If *Sport Canada* wishes to withdraw an athlete's AAP support for allegedly failing to meet training or competitive requirements, the steps listed in Section 8.8, Fraudulent Misrepresentation, apply.

8.5 Violation of the Athlete/NSO Agreement

If, during the carding cycle, an athlete allegedly violates any of the obligations specified in his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement, the *NSO* may recommend withdrawal of carded status. In such cases, the steps listed in Section 8.4, Failure To Meet Training or Competitive Commitments, apply.

8.6 Athlete's Failure to Meet Responsibilities Outlined in the AAP Guidelines

If *Sport Canada* wishes to withdraw an athlete's AAP support for allegedly failing to meet responsibilities outlined in the AAP guidelines (this booklet), the steps listed in

Section 8.8, Fraudulent Misrepresentation, apply.

8.7 Gross Breach of Discipline

If the *NSO* wishes to recommend withdrawal of an athlete's carded status for an alleged gross breach of discipline, the steps listed in Section 8.4, Failure To Meet Training or Competitive Commitments, apply.

If *Sport Canada* wishes to withdraw an athlete's AAP support for alleged gross breach of discipline, the steps listed in Section 8.8, Fraudulent Misrepresentation, apply.

8.8 Fraudulent Misrepresentation

If Sport Canada has grounds to believe that an athlete has made a false application to obtain AAP benefits for which the athlete would have otherwise been ineligible (for example, the AAP living and training allowance, tuition support or special-needs assistance), Sport Canada shall take the following action:

- The AAP Manager requests of the NSO by registered mail that an investigation with appropriate due process be undertaken regarding the alleged fraudulent application. A copy of this letter is also sent to the athlete by registered mail.
- After the initial letter from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending resolution of the matter.
- If, following the NSO's report of its investigation, Sport Canada wishes to continue proceedings for withdrawing AAP support, the AAP Manager notifies the athlete by registered mail of the allegations against him or her. This letter also informs the athlete that he or she has 30 days from the date the letter is received to make representations regarding why his or her carded status should not be withdrawn.
- After this 30-day period is over *and* due consideration has been given to any representations made by or on behalf of the athlete, Sport Canada may withdraw the athlete's carded status, impose a lesser penalty or declare that no misrepresentation occurred.

Note: Sport Canada reserves the right to impose penalties for fraudulent misrepresentation above and beyond the immediate withdrawal of carded status; for example, Sport Canada may declare the athlete ineligible for AAP benefits for one full year from the time of the finding of misrepresentation.

Note: If an athlete has his or her carding withdrawn because of fraudulent misrepresentation, the athlete must refund any AAP benefits received as a result of fraudulent application. Furthermore, since NSOs endorse all AAP applications, NSOs are responsible for facilitating the return of funds from athletes in these circumstances.

8.9 Doping Violations

In accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport, athletes carded under the AAP will have their carding withdrawn if they are

- charged with a doping infraction proven by a positive laboratory finding; or
- found guilty of a doping-related infraction.

Note: It is the responsibility of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) to inform Sport Canada of all positive laboratory findings and all doping-related infractions within the Canadian domestic doping-control program. It is the responsibility of the NSO to inform Sport Canada of all doping infractions resulting from international testing.

In accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport, the following will occur when doping infractions are proven by a positive laboratory finding:

- In the event of a positive laboratory finding of the A sample, the athlete's AAP benefits will be withheld pending the outcome of the analysis of the B sample. If the B sample proves negative and a doping infraction is not declared, the athlete's AAP support will be re-instated retroactive to the date on which it was originally withheld.
- If the laboratory analysis of the B sample confirms the positive test, the athlete's AAP benefits will continue to be withheld until such time as a final ruling is made in any subsequent appeal. If the athlete's appeal is upheld and a doping infraction is not declared, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated retroactively following the appeal.
- If no appeal is filed by or on behalf of the athlete, the athlete will be subject to sanctions in accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport.
- If an appeal is unsuccessful, the athlete is subject to sanctions in accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport.
- If an appeal of a doping infraction extends into a new carding cycle and if the appeal is successful, the athlete normally has to meet the NSO's carding criteria to receive AAP benefits in the new carding cycle.

In accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport, the following will occur when an athlete is found guilty of a doping-related infraction or admits to a doping infraction:

- If an investigation of a doping-related infraction finds that an infraction occurred, CCES shall so notify Sport Canada, and AAP benefits will be withheld pending the outcome of a subsequent appeal made by or on behalf of the athlete.
- If no appeal is filed by or on behalf of the athlete, the athlete will be subject to sanctions in accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport.
- If the athlete's appeal is upheld, his or her AAP benefits will be retroactively reinstated following the appeal.
- If an appeal is unsuccessful, the athlete is subject to sanctions in accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport.
- If an appeal of a doping infraction extends into a new carding cycle and if the appeal is successful, the athlete normally has to meet the NSO's carding criteria to receive AAP benefits in the new carding cycle.

8.10 Reinstatement of AAP Support

In accordance with the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping in Sport, an athlete found guilty of a doping infraction who wants AAP support to be reinstated must apply for reinstatement of sport eligibility *and* eligibility for direct federal sport funding:

- Reinstatement for AAP support may be made only under Category I or Category II reinstatement.
- If reinstatement for sport eligibility is granted under Category I or Category II Reinstatement, *eligibility* for AAP support will take immediate but not retroactive effect.
- If an application for a Category II reinstatement is successful, the athlete must meet the NSO's carding criteria to be eligible for AAP benefits and will be subject to normal AAP nomination procedures.
- Reinstatement of AAP support may be granted retroactively by Sport Canada senior management in consultation with AAP management and CCES.

Section 9 Special Situations

This section covers a number of special situations that may occur in the course of an athlete's involvement in the AAP. The following questions about such involvement are answered:

- Can AAP decisions be appealed?
- What happens if athletes are ill or injured?
- What about athletes living outside Canada?
- What about athletes attending foreign post-secondary educational institutions?
- What if athletes are under 18?
- What happens when non-carded athletes are named to Olympic Teams?
- What about athletes in sports not funded by Sport Canada?
- What about Olympic sports where there is no women's event in the Games?
- Are A and B cards awarded in relay events?
- What about replacement carding?

9.1 Can AAP Decisions Be Appealed?

The NSO must ensure that an appeal procedure (based on due process) for the resolution of AAP-related complaints is in place and made known and available to all athletes. The athlete must first pursue any appeal on AAP-related matters through the appropriate NSO appeal process. Following this appeal, athletes have the right to request a final review by Sport Canada.

Sport Canada will provide a review procedure to both athletes and NSOs on any AAP decision that affects the athlete or the NSO directly. Any requests for review of AAP decisions should be directed to the Manager of the AAP, who will direct the issue to the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee for a decision. The AAP Review Committee consists of the Director of Sport Programs, the Manager of High Performance and Major Games and the Manager of NSO Programs.

All requests for review of AAP decisions should normally be directed to Sport Canada from the NSO. If an athlete makes a direct request for review of an AAP decision to Sport Canada, Sport Canada will do the following before proceeding with a review:

1. seek the opinion of the NSO; and
2. ensure that the NSO has provided a hearing to the athlete on the issue in question in accordance with its published appeals procedures.

9.2 What Happens If Athletes Are Ill or Injured?

The AAP has been carefully designed to handle exceptions to "normal" training and competition. AAP policy covers the following special situations related to illness or injury:

- short-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- long-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons; and
- failure to meet renewal criteria for health-related reasons.

Short-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Health-related circumstances that limit training and competition for relatively short

periods (i.e., less than four months) are a matter strictly between the NSO and the athlete and do not fall under AAP policy.

Long-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Carded athletes who are unable to maintain full training and competition commitments for periods longer than four months because of injury, illness or pregnancy will continue to receive 100% of the AAP financial support to which they would otherwise be entitled, provided the following conditions are met:

- The athlete undertakes in writing to train or rehabilitate or both under the supervision of the NSO (or its designate) for the period of time for which the athlete is unable to fulfil the training and competition commitments that are part of the normal Athlete/NSO Agreement and at a level that minimizes risk to the athlete's personal health and ensures optimal return to full training and competition at the earliest possible date.
- The athlete signifies in writing his or her intention to return to full high-performance training and competition at the earliest date possible following the illness, injury or pregnancy.
- In the case of injured or ill athletes, a positive prognosis for the athlete's return to training and competition at the carded-athlete level in the sport within 8 to 12 months is required from an NSO team physician or equivalent.

Failure to Meet Renewal Criteria for Health-related Reasons

At the end of a carding cycle during which an athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons, not achieved the standards required for renewal of carded status, he or she may be considered for recarding for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions:

- The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of his or her injury, illness or pregnancy and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the NSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- The NSO, based on its technical judgement and that of an NSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period.
- The athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his or her long-term commitment to high-performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having made the carding criteria.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Carded-Athlete Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

If an athlete wants, for reasons related to injury, illness or pregnancy, to voluntarily withdraw temporarily or permanently from normal carded-athlete training and competition requirements, the usual rules for voluntary withdrawal from the AAP

apply. The athlete will no longer be eligible for the monthly living and training allowance but will be eligible, if qualified, for deferred tuition support or special-needs assistance.

9.3 What about Athletes Living Outside Canada?

Athletes living outside Canada are not normally eligible for AAP support. Any exceptions to this requirement for athletic purposes must be approved by Sport Canada. Athletes leaving Canada should be fully aware that any exceptions will be made only through special submissions by the NSO concerned. Athletes living outside Canada for athletic or academic purposes must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Sport Canada, that appropriate training programs are in place and are being maintained at an appropriate level by the NSO.

Athletes who are full-time permanent residents outside Canada for more than two years normally will not be considered eligible for AAP benefits. However, if these athletes are competing within the Canadian sport system and representing Canada at international competitions as a member of the NSO National Team, carding may be considered.

Athletes who are eligible and meet the carding criteria but are not funded because they are living outside Canada should be nominated for carding by the NSO and recorded by Sport Canada. This could result in the C-1 card status being waived should the athlete meet the C-card criteria in subsequent years and move back to Canada.

9.4 What about Athletes Attending Foreign Post-Secondary Educational Institutions?

Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including NCAA institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are *not* eligible to receive AAP support in the months in which they are attending the foreign post-secondary educational institution. These athletes *may* be nominated by the NSO for AAP support during the months they are involved in National Team training and competition activities and *not* attending the foreign post-secondary institution.

9.5 What If Athletes Are under 18?

All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their AAP application form.

Athletes under 18 who meet the C-card criteria will receive the C-1 monthly stipend. If the athlete is living away from home for sport purposes, Sport Canada will consider a request from the NSO to grant the athlete C-card funding.

9.6 What If Non-carded Athletes Are Named to Olympic/Paralympic Teams?

Athletes who are not carded but who are selected as members of the Canadian Olympic Team by the COA will be carded by Sport Canada from the month in which they are selected to the Olympic Team until the month of the Olympic Games.

9.7 What about Athletes in Sports Not Funded by Sport Canada?

As a general rule, AAP financial aid is limited to athletes in sports funded by Sport Canada as a result of the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF) or the Funding and Accountability Framework for Athletes with a Disability (FAFAD). Exceptions are made only if *all* of the following conditions are met:

- The *athlete* meets the A-card criteria.
- The athlete meets all other eligibility criteria for athletes (see Section 2.3).
- The athlete's sport meets all AAP sport eligibility requirements (see Section 2.2).

9.8 What about Olympic Sports Where There Is No Women's Event in the Games?

Women in Olympic sports where there is no comparable event for women in the Games will be eligible for carding if all of the following conditions are met:

- There are no physiologically comparable events on the Olympic program that the woman athlete is eligible for.
- The woman athlete meets the A- or B-card criteria.
- The athlete's sport meets all AAP sport eligibility requirements (see Section 2.2).

9.9 Are A or B Cards Awarded in Relay Events?

Athletes who compete in the finals of relay events will be awarded A- or B-card status (see the existing A- and B-card criteria), depending on the result of the relay team in that final. Athletes who participate in qualifying or semi-finals in a relay event but do not compete in the finals of the event will be carded based on the level of performance required to advance to that final.

For example, if a relay team is required to finish in the top 8 overall in the semifinals to advance to the final, an athlete who participated in the semi-finals and contributed to the relay team advancing to a finals with 8 teams but did not participate in that final would be carded at the B-card level.

9.10 What about Replacement Carding?

"Replacement" carding to fill vacant positions caused by retirement or departure from a national team program will not normally be provided during the course of the carding year. (An R or J athlete who makes the National Team during the carding year will normally be carded and funded at the higher Senior National Team level at the start of the next carding year.)

Athletes who retire or who are under review by their NSO may be replaced by a designated athlete if these situations are discussed with Sport Canada and the source of potential replacements is identified at the time of the annual AAP Review Meeting.

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